

AN IRISH CALIFORNIA IN THE BOGS.—

Mr. Jasper Rogers and his bog charcoal for deodorizing the metropolis, and thus effecting its sanitary reform, has been completely outshone by a light exhibited in the House of Commons—a veritable extract of bog, if not a solid concentration of will-o'-wisp. The O'Gorman Mahon, in calling attention to a development of the resources of Ireland,—one, he said, of the most important discoveries that had ever been made,—produced what he called a *spermaceti* candle made from Irish bog, though how the cetaceous sperm got into the bog it would be hard to say, but at least it appears to have been very like a whale sperm candle, and was examined with some curiosity by Lord John Russell and other hon. members. This the O'Gorman said, however, was but one of a number of valuable extracts which he enumerated, from the same fertile mine,—and he then appealed to Lord Ashley as to the truth of what he had stated. His lordship promptly responded by assuring the House that these substances, he had every reason to believe, had been extracted from Irish bog by Mr. Owen, the chemist,—a most trustworthy gentleman and a personal friend of his own. Mr. Owen had already invested a large capital in the Irish bogs, and had been carrying on his operations for twelve months. Out of every hundred tons of peat, the cost of which was 5*l.*, and 6*l.* more in labour, but take the cost at 20*l.*, the results, on which Mr. Owen staked his character, were these:—Carbonate of ammonia, 2,602 lb., value 32*l.* 10*s.*; soda, 2,118 lb., value 8*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.*; vinegar, 600 lb., value 7*l.* 10*s.*; naphtha, 30 gallons, value 7*l.* 10*s.*; candles, 600 lb., value 17*l.* 10*s.*; camphine oil, 600 lb., value 5*l.*; common oil, 800 lb., value 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*; gas, 6*l.* in value; and ashes, 1*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*; making a total of 91*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* Moreover, the soil below is so saturated with ammonia as to be invaluable for agriculture. Englishmen, no less than Irishmen, may well rejoice if all this be no *ignis fatuus*. It unfortunately happens, however, that 20,000*l.* were long since sunk in Dartmoor bogs, in just such extractive efforts, but they certainly have not yet sprung up and fructified to perennial profit.

STEAM-HUSBANDRY.—The *Mark-lane Express* notices an interesting machine or combination of machines erected on a property near Shaftesbury. This machine (for it seems like one perfect whole) receives the sheaves, disengages the corn, clears it of all small seeds, re-thrashes any ears that may escape the first operation, winnows it from the chaff, separates the best from the imperfect corn, conveys the best into the market sacks, deposits the tailing in another part of the barn, and passes the straw into the yard. It also accurately weighs the sacks of corn; and as the scale turns shuts off the supply; rings the call-bell, so that the man in attendance ties and removes the sack, replacing it by an empty one, to be filled and removed in the same manner. At the same moment a pair of mill-stones is engaged grinding corn, and producing meal for the consumption of the cattle; the dressing apparatus is not yet added. The corn-bruiser is also performing its part in the preparation of food for the stock. The chaff-cutting machine is in full operation, and the bone-mill at work. The whole of this machinery is said to be of the most simple construction, and not easily thrown out of repair. It is worked by a small steam-engine, not consuming more than 1 cwt. of coal per hour, and attended by one man.

THE CULLODEN MONUMENT.—Mr. Mackenzie, of Elgin, architect, has constructed a design for this monument, for the erection of which a considerable sum has already been subscribed. The model represents a large, irregular, broken, conical mass, in imitation of natural rock, round which is a rough road,—now winding through clefts, and now ascending by steps, seemingly water-worn, until it reaches a small flat on the top of the mass. In front, crowning a precipice, is a fine female figure, leaning on the rock, and mourning; with two boys, holding by her hand and skirts,—the young one looking anxiously up in her sorrowful face. In front of the precipice is rudely carved the word "Culloden, 1746." At various prominent points the model presents small tablets of various forms, to be erected by clans, or in memory of individuals.—*Edinburgh Weekly Register*.

BUILDERS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.—

The second annual general meeting was held at the London Tavern, on the 30th ult., Mr. Biers, the president, in the chair. The meeting was numerously attended, and was addressed by various gentlemen, who united in expressing their acknowledgments to the president for his perseverance and attention to the interests of the institution. The usual annual report was read, and adopted with all the more cordiality, inasmuch as it announced that, with the aid afforded at the anniversary dinner, which we lately reported at large, and when no less than 110 new subscribers, it seems, had added to the previous prosperous progress of the institution the goodly sum of 500*l.*, the Directors now felt themselves in the unexpected position of being already able to announce that they would give the subscribers an opportunity of exercising their privilege in the election of five pensioners, who, from October next, would each be granted the maximum rate of pension fixed by the rules, namely 24*l.* for males and 20*l.* for females. Such an announcement was regarded by the meeting as an unprecedented circumstance, considering the short time since the institution was founded. Some incidental relief to workmen disabled by accident is now also to be afforded. It was stated in the report that the institution now possesses 1,000*l.* stock in the 3 per cent. consols, in the name of trustees for behoof of the charity. All donations requiring, by the rules, to be funded, the directors wish to urge the increase of annual subscriptions as the main dependence of the poor objects of the charity and the chief hope of increasing their number. Earl Mansvers was elected a patron, and a number of gentlemen vice-presidents. The usual votes of thanks were then accorded, and the meeting separated.

ESTIMATING—CHELMSFORD UNION.—The careless manner in which persons connected with the building profession appear to make their estimates being so often exposed and commented on in your valuable publication without effect, it would appear that either inexperience or recklessness must be the cause of such glaring inconsistencies. The following tenders for painting the above union-house were received by the Board:—No. 1, from Islington, 60*l.*; No. 2, 50*l.*; No. 3, 35*l.*; No. 4, 35*l.*; No. 5, 32*l.* 10*s.*; No. 6, 32*l.*; No. 7, 24*l.* 12*s.*—these six were from Chelmsford and its vicinity. At the previous board two architects sent tenders for superintending the above work, the one 1*l.* 1*s.*; the other 5*l.* 5*s.* In the early part of the year tenders were sent in for a wall containing three rods of brickwork, including a 1½ inch door and frame, also two privies with half a square of roofing and slating to the same, 112 feet superficial inch deal partition in the dormitory, painted both sides in three oils, with other minor works specified. The tenders were, No. 1, 48*l.*; No. 2, 46*l.* 10*s.*; No. 3, 41*l.* 10*s.*; No. 4, 41*l.*; No. 5, 40*l.*; No. 6, 35*l.* The last had it,—pray who was the winner?—A. B.

THE BUILDINGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—

The Bill introduced into the House of Lords by the Earl of Carlisle, for the amendment of the present Buildings Act, has just been printed. It consists of 150 clauses and 12 schedules. It is brought forward (though too late as to legislation) so that any useful information may be elicited upon it during the recess, with a view of resuming the Bill at a very early period in the next session. We had prepared a summary of its provisions, but some of the clauses seem on a hasty inspection so singularly different from what we looked for, that we think it better to withhold the summary until such time as we can give the Bill consideration and express our opinions upon it. What the Committee, who at the request of Lord Carlisle reported on the amendments required, will say to it, we scarcely know.

INDEPENDENT COLLEGE, ST. JOHN'S-WOOD—COMPETITION.—Ten architects were invited by the committee to compete for the above college, including Messrs. Donaldson, Davies, Barry and Brown, &c. The Committee, assisted by John Shaw, Esq., of Christ's Hospital, have selected the design of Mr. Emmett for execution, and awarded the premiums to Messrs. Kendall, jun., and Pope.

PROJECTED WORKS.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders for works at a new pauper lunatic asylum at Powick, Worcester; by 21st inst., for pewing, repewing, repairing and altering, warming, &c., the interior of Northfleet Church; by 14th, for new walling to enclose addition to Jewish burying-ground at Mile-end; by 6th, for reglazing the nave windows of St. Mary's Church, Brompton Ash, Northamptonshire, in quarries, with old glass and new lead; by 8th, for additions and alterations at St. George the Martyr's workhouse, Southwark; by 7th, for working and maintaining permanent way and works of Blackwall Railway; by 1st September, for a considerable number of street cocks, fire cocks, or hydrants, and air valves, for Manchester water-works; by 6th, for paving and keeping in repair the streets, lanes, courts, &c., of St. Mary's, Rotherhithe; by 9th, for the reconstruction of the drainage and water supply, and for alterations and works, at Cuckfield Union Workhouse; and by 13th inst., for lighting with gas a portion of the district of St. John's, Notting-hill, Kensington.

SUSPENSION BRIDGE AT CHESTER—A NOVELTY.—Messrs. McKean, Perkes, and Co., of Liverpool, have designed and constructed a light Chinese-looking bridge for Earl Howe, near the Grosvenor-bridge, across the Dee, and spanning a ravine on a slight slope by 12 iron chain rods in links of 15 feet each, with a light-looking X shaped railing. The means by which this bridge is suspended are hid from view. The span is 150 feet between the bearings of the points of suspension. The platform is 7 feet wide. The chain rods are secured together by flat bars about 6 feet apart, on which the timber platform rests and is secured by T-headed bolts and nuts. The chains are made fast at one end to a stone pier built in the embankment. The centre of the pier at the other end of the bridge is formed into a large pit, on the top of which is secured a turn-barrel, round which the chains take one wind and descend into the pit, and are secured to a cast-iron plate suspended near the bottom, at a depth of 30 feet, on which is built a mass of masonry, forming a weight which counterbalances the whole. It is further secured by backstays at each end of the bridge, running inland under ground, and belted to blocks of hard oak. The cost is said to be very moderate.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA, COVENT GARDEN.—

The scenery and costumes in Meyerbeer's new opera, *Le Prophète*, are worthy of the magnificent work they are intended to illustrate. Messrs. Grieve and Telbin have here done their best, and we the more gladly award them our hearty commendation, because, on a late occasion, we found it necessary to object, on the score of chronology. The first scene—a landscape with windmills—is a nice work. In the scene for the winter sports there is a wooden bridge across the stage, and a large tree in the middle distance, cleverly managed. The great scene, however, is that of the third act, the interior of the cathedral of Munster, for which a novel point of view is taken,—across the transept, looking obliquely into the choir. When the stage is filled with a crowd of splendid costumes the appearance presented by this scene has seldom been equalled.

FALL OF A STAIRCASE IN CHARLES-STREET, DRURY-LANE.—A cry of fire was raised in a large building in Charles-street, Drury-lane,—formerly a coach factory, and now a Roman Catholic chapel,—on Sunday evening last; and a crowd rushing to the staircase, this fell in with a tremendous crash, and seriously injured a number of persons. The alarm was caused, in the first instance, by the weight of the audience causing a partial subsidence of the floor.

ST. MARY'S, WEST BROMPTON.—The first stone of this church, of which we gave an engraving a short time since, was laid on the 2nd inst., by the Venerable Archdeacon Sinclair, assisted by a large body of the local clergy and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Robert Gunter, Esq., the donor of the land, afterwards entertained a number of the principal visitors at his residence.

BRIGHTON PAVILION.—The inhabitants of Brighton have determined on purchasing the Pavilion at the price named by the Woods and Forests, 53,000*l.*